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ABSTRACT

There is a need to examine in a positive way what has been done in the interest of articulation among the various levels of higher education. For too long, those in higher education have tended to look only at the negative side of the picture and have ignored the successes. This article is an attempt to present some of the advances made in recent years in the state of Florida. It traces the background of the growth of higher education in Florida, and the development of a general education compact, an articulation agreement, university liaison representatives, and counseling manuals. Two major topics discussed are the 1971 Florida Articulation Agreement and the establishment and functioning of the Junior College Relations Office. These two basic events have led to a number of other university and state-wide programs which have promoted better articulation between community colleges and universities. (Author)

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A POSITIVE LOOK AT ARTICULATION: FLORIDA, 1975

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INTRODUCTION

Too much has been said and written by critics of the various segments of higher education concerning what has not been done in the interests of articulation. The time has come to take a hard look at the positive side of the issue and examine some of the successful efforts to promote articulation.

No longer is it necessary for proponents of community college education to view their university counterparts as antagonists. Instead, the time has arrived for cooperative effort in achieving common goals and recognition of the role to be played by each segment of higher education. We need to accent the positive and be made aware of the successes which have been and are being accomplished.

In Florida, a cooperative working relationship has been achieved. Although there are still problems, there are also guidelines for attacking these problems, and people willing to work together in solving them.

BACKGROUND

In order to understand the present status of articulation in the state, a brief look at the history of higher education in Florida is necessary. Two segments of the development will be traced--the State University System and the State Community College System.

The State University System of Florida began in the middle of the nineteenth century. By the end of that century, three of the present state universities were in operation. These were the University of Florida, Florida State College for Women, (now Florida State University), and Florida A and M College.

The university of Florida was strictly for men until 1946 when both this university and Florida State College for Women became co-educational universities. Not until 1960 were there any further state universities added. Since then, however, six others have been opened, and the state system now includes nine universities. Four of these new universities provide for upper division and graduate students only. Five of the present universities compete with the state's twenty-eight junior colleges

for freshmen and sophomores, and each of these five has a limitation on the number of freshmen they may admit and applies some selective criteria in admitting these freshmen.

On the other hand, Florida's community college system began rather slowly in the thirties and forties. In the middle to late fifties, however, a plan for the statewide expansion of the system was adopted and implementation began. The number grew from four colleges in 1950 to fourteen in 1960 and to twenty-seven by 1970. Pasco-Hernando Community College, the last of the twenty-eight Florida Community Colleges, was authorized in 1967 and opened in 1972. With the opening of this college, there was a junior college within commuting distance of more than 99% of the state's population.¹

Enrollment statistics for the fall quarter/semester 1974 show that the range in size of the Florida Community Colleges is from 40,000 at Miami-Dade to approximately 825 at South Florida Junior College in Avon Park.² Programs in these colleges differ widely based largely on location and size of the college. Taken as a whole, the student who begins his education in a Florida Community College is well prepared for transfer to a Florida university even with the diversity which exists.

Early in the period of expansion of the system of junior colleges in Florida there developed an awareness of the need for articulation. One of the most important recommendations evolving from the studies of post-high-school education conducted in Florida during the period 1954-1957 was one which emphasized this need. Florida's system of higher education had a distinct advantage toward promoting articulation since all segments were responsible directly to the State Board of Education and the Commissioner.³

In July, 1975, a special committee was appointed to promote articulation within the state system of education.⁴ The members of the committee represented high schools, junior colleges, universities, Board of Regents staff and the staff of the State Department of Education.

This special committee, reorganized in 1966 to reflect the growing variety of educational institutions, achieved a number of important goals. First of all, general education was defined and was made a matter of institutional integrity. The policy recommended by the Committee and adopted in 1965 reads as follows:-

Each public institution of higher education in Florida, i.e. each State University and each Community Junior College, is encouraged to foster and promulgate a program of general education. This basic program* for students working toward a baccalaureate degree should involve not less than 36 semester hours of academic credit.

The institutions are encouraged to exchange ideas in the development and improvement of programs of general education. The experience already gained in the established State Universities and Community Junior Colleges will be of value. While the institutions are to work cooperatively in the development and improvement of general education programs, each institution has the continuing responsibility for determining the character of its own program.

After a public institution of higher learning in Florida has developed and published its program of general education, the integrity of the program will be recognized by the other public institutions in Florida. Once a student has been certified by such an institution as having completed satisfactorily its prescribed general education program, no other public institution of higher learning in Florida to which he may be qualified to transfer will require any further lower division general education courses in his program.

*General education programs provide basic liberal education and include work in areas such as: communications, mathematics, social sciences, humanities, and the natural sciences.⁵

Secondly the committee recommended a policy on advanced placement which was accepted and adopted by most of Florida's colleges. This policy was stated as follows:

In order to provide greater flexibility and opportunity for able Florida youth to move ahead with their education, the Professional Committee for Relating Public Secondary and Higher Education in Florida proposes the following state-wide pact concerning the use of the ETS Advanced Placement Program by institutions of higher education in Florida:

1. Florida institutions of higher education will include clear statements of their policy with respect to the Advanced Placement Program in their annual catalog.
2. All Florida public institutions of higher education (junior and senior will participate in the Program and adopt the following common policy.*
 - a. Scores of 5, 4, and 3, will be accepted for credit, such credits to be assigned by the appropriate officer of the institution in terms of the policies of the institution.**
 - b. Scores of 2 will be referred to the appropriate departments for recommendations concerning possible waiver and/or credit.

- c. No credit will be allowed for scores of 1.
 - d. Senior institutions will accept advanced placement credit for scores of 3, 4, and 5 included in transcripts from the junior colleges. Credit for Scores of 2 included in transcripts will be handled as in 2 (b) above.
3. All Florida private institutions of higher education are invited to subscribe to this pact.
 4. It is not intended that the use of the Advanced Placement Program should replace other existed relationships between secondary schools and institutions of higher education concerning waiver, or credit by other means. The Program should supplement, not replace, these means.
 5. Florida secondary schools, both public and private, will be encouraged to promote the use of the program by whatever means are available to them. They will be assured that successful students will receive credit by the institutions which are signatory to this agreement.
 6. The Professional Committee for Relating Florida Public Secondary and Higher Education working with the officers of the Advanced Placement Programs will carry out annual state-wide studies concerning the success, numbers, and problems encountered, and will send out an annual report to all participating institutions.

*Before such a pact can become operative, system-wide, it will have to be approved by the institution.

*While credit should be given without reference to departmental recommendations, the policies of the institution should determine whether the credit is used to meet institutional or departmental requirements, or to be applied as elective credit.⁶

Thirdly, a transfer policy which would permit students to move from one level of educational accomplishment to another without undue road blocks was recommended as essential. A policy statement concerning transfer was developed and approved by the committee.

Education is a continuous process even though handled in separate administrative units. Recognition of this basic principle underlying the philosophy governing progress through these various units facilitates such progress, redounds to the benefit of the students, the various institutions and hence to the State itself. Basic to this philosophy is mutual respect for and trust in the educational validity of the experience of the student in each institution. In acknowledgement of this confidence, the following policies have been formulated to facilitate transfer among institutions.

1. Requirements for admission to upper division colleges and schools of the Florida public universities should be the same for Florida public junior college graduates as for students who complete the first two years on a university campus. Those transferring from the public junior colleges prior to graduation shall be treated

as an other transfer student and must meet all university requirements for lower as well as upper division, except as provided in paragraph 3 below.

2. Admission to the upper division should be granted to any graduate of a state accredited junior college in the State of Florida who has completed the college parallel program, and whose graduation shall normally be on the basis of an overall average of 2.0 based on the 4.0 system on all college work attempted. Junior college graduates should be permitted to make up prerequisites while in upper division status. The university will consider exceptional cases within the capacities of the university upon recommendation from the junior college and provided space is available.
3. Junior College transfers shall be considered as having met the general education requirements of the receiving senior institution if the junior college has certified that the student has completed the lower division general education requirements of the junior college. This policy should apply to all junior college transfers, both graduates and non-graduates.
4. Twelfth grade test score requirements of the senior institution shall not be criterion for admission for any graduate of a junior college.
5. All credits of "C" or better should be received, accepted, and recorded on the transferring student's record by the receiving senior institution in order that the upper division colleges may determine how many additional hours are needed for graduation with a bachelor's degree. This would not necessitate the removal of minimum upper division requirements for graduation but would protect the transferring student against loss of credits in excess of 64 hours when such courses are applicable to the degree which a student is seeking.
6. Transfer students from a junior college should be exempt from meeting the lower division physical education requirements of the receiving senior institution if the junior college has certified that a student has completed the physical education requirements of the junior college.
7. The graduation requirements in effect at a receiving senior institution at the time a student enrolls at a public junior college should apply to that student in the same manner that graduation requirements of that senior institution apply to its native students, provided that the student's attendance record is continuous.

Nothing in the above should obscure the fact that degree granting institutions have a significant responsibility for insuring that the degree holder has a reasonable competency and an equal chance to compete in his chosen profession. Most degree curricula reflect a considered judgment of the faculty members most closely in touch with the skills essential for professional success. Institutional rules and requirements should not lead the student to regard the mere collection of college credits and grades as more important than the achievement of real understandings. Graduation

and transfer requirements are phrased in terms of a minimum number of credits and a minimum quality index (grades). More significant is a combination of educational experiences (courses) that give significant opportunity for acquiring the essential understandings and the base for progressing satisfactorily at a new level, whether in an educational institution or in a chosen profession.⁷

Finally a series of statewide articulation conferences was held in which representatives of all levels of higher education outlined expected requirements for each level in a given subject area. Reports of each of these conference proceedings were reproduced and were made available to all colleges. Conferences were held in the following disciplines: Business Administration, Chemistry, Engineering, Foreign Languages, Mathematics, Music, Physics, History, Biology, Art, English, Physical Education. Agreements were also worked out relative to: Agriculture, Library Science, and Teacher Education.⁸

THE JUNIOR COLLEGE RELATIONS OFFICE.

In the late sixties a new university position title appeared, and the director of interinstitutional or junior college relations became an accepted member of the administrative team of most Florida universities. This administrator-counselor today carries a variety of titles in the nine Florida universities but has similar responsibilities from institution to institution.⁹

Prior to the 1971 articulation agreement, the work of the junior college relations office was to relay information to the junior colleges concerning the varying requirements for transfer admission to upper division colleges at the state universities. These individuals, some with prior experience in junior colleges, were also responsible for "selling" the community college transfer student to the university faculty and staff as an acceptable, capable member of the university academic community. He kept grade reports, perused deans lists and honor's releases, and made a number of statistical examinations of student performance for this purpose and with good results.

Since the 1971 articulation agreement some changes have occurred in the responsibilities of this university liaison officer. When asked to list their responsibilities for a recent study of this office done in Florida,¹⁰ the present community college

relations officers responded with thirty-seven items. These can be grouped into the following eight areas according to importance indicated by frequency of mention:

1. To serve as disseminator of information from the university to the community college students, counselors and faculty.
2. Coordinate all community college counseling and recruiting visitations by the university.
3. Inform university deans and faculty of the requirements of the Articulation Agreement and sensitize the university to the unique needs of transfer students.
4. Promote joint cooperative academic programs and projects between the university and community colleges.
5. Represent the university at community college councils and meetings.
6. Prepare and distribute community college counseling manual.
7. Sponsor workshops for transfer students to aid in communications between the community colleges and the university.
8. Analyze transfer student's programs and problems and provide feedback to the community college and the university.

THE ARTICULATION AGREEMENT

Committee recommendations concerning what should be done in the way of articulation and university articulation officers were all positive steps. The most positive accomplishment, however, was the adoption of the Articulation Agreement in April, 1971.¹¹ This agreement provided a basic framework within which students who completed programs under specified conditions were assured of the acceptance of their work as they transferred to state universities in Florida.

In April, 1971, the agreement was jointly adopted by the Division of Community Colleges and the Division of Universities to (1) recommend specific areas of agreement between community colleges and state universities; (2) set forth criteria for the awarding of the Associate in Arts degree; (3) define the Associate in Arts degree as a component of a baccalaureate degree; (4) provide a continuous evaluation and review of programs, policies, procedures and relationships affecting transfer of students; and (5) recommend such revisions as are needed to promote the success and

general well-being of the transfer student.¹²

The major provisions of the Articulation Agreement are:

1. The reaffirmation of the integrity of the general education programs as established and implemented by each Florida institution.
2. The definition of the A.A. degree as consisting of 60 semester hours of academic course work which includes a general education program of at least 36 semester hours, and the achievement of a grade point average of not less than a 2.0 in all courses attempted.
 - (a) G.P.A. must be 2.0 in all courses in junior college awarding the degree.
 - (b) Only final grade received in courses repeated will be counted in figuring the G.P.A.
 - (c) A grade of "D" will be accepted for transfer.
 - (d) Upper division department has decision as to whether "D" counts toward satisfying requirements in major.
 - (e) Credit awarded by CLEP at the 50th percentile or higher must be accepted for transfer.
3. The responsibility for meeting general education requirements is made the sole responsibility of the institution awarding the A.A. degree.
4. The determination of the major course requirements for a baccalaureate degree is made the sole responsibility of the state university awarding the degree.
5. Guidelines for admission to upper division programs which are competitive due to space or fiscal limitations are discussed.
6. Program development in individual universities based on other associate degrees (A.S. or A.A.S.) is encouraged.
7. The necessity for the publication of and updating of graduation requirements for each baccalaureate degree program for use by all other institutions in the state is stated.

8. The necessity for clarity in presentation of lower division prerequisites for each upper division specialization or major program is stated.
The university catalogue in effect at the time of the student's initial enrollment in a community college shall govern lower division prerequisites provided enrollment is continuous.
9. A common transcript form for use by all state colleges and universities is required.
10. Experimental programs are encouraged.
11. The Articulation Coordinating Committee is established.

Responsibility for interpreting the Articulation Agreement and for relating provisions of the Agreement to specific cases was vested by the State Board of Education in the Articulation Coordinating Committee. This committee is composed of seven members, three of whom are appointed by the director of the Division of Community Colleges, three by the Chancellor of the State University System of Florida, and one by the Commissioner of Education.

The adoption of the agreement and the establishment of the coordinating committee solved many of the old problems of articulation, however not all of them. The articulation/liaison representatives and the coordinating committee have been continuously occupied in implementing the provisions and in interpretations of the existing agreement.

Since April of 1971, there have been in excess of 100 changes and/or interpretations of provisions.¹³ Also, colleges and students have appealed to the coordinating committee for recommendations in disputed cases.

COUNSELING MANUALS

In an attempt to provide clarity in listing of prerequisite requirements, each of the nine universities in Florida has published a counseling manual. These manuals, all using the same format, provide the community college counselor with up-to-date information about each program major offered by the university.¹⁴

Usually these programs are one to two pages in length. The suggested lower division program is provided and any prerequisites are listed. This is followed by a

listing of the upper division requirements for the baccalaureate degree showing the minimum number of upper division hours and minimum number of hours for a degree.

Counselors and advisors have found this to be a most valuable aid in working with potential transfer students.¹⁵ Students have been able to plan their programs with more confidence and universities have had to look more carefully at requirements

ORIENTATION AND EARLY REGISTRATION PROGRAMS

Special orientation and early registration programs for transfer students have been initiated on several campuses. At the University of Florida and at the University of South Florida, a student staff is recruited and trained to work with this program.

Approximately a thousand transfer students will be invited to participate this summer in this orientation program at the University of Florida. These students will have opportunity for orientation, advisement, and early registration.

At Florida State University, a special transfer student open house is held in February. Students are invited to come and spend two days. These students live in dorms and have access to all segments of university life. Representatives of all university offices are available for questions in a central facility during the evening.

TRANSFER ADVISOR WORKSHOPS

A counselor-advisor workshop is provided by the University of Florida where the community college counselors have an opportunity to talk with former students who have transferred from their college. Opportunity for obtaining information about the university and its programs is provided.

Feedback sessions after the interviews with students provide valuable information for both community college visitors and upper division representatives. Many student problems may be immediately resolved and preventive measures can be instituted for helping future students avoid these same problems.

ARTICULATION VISITS TO COMMUNITY COLLEGES

During the year teams from universities make pre-arranged visits to community college campuses. The composition of the normal team includes representatives of: Admissions, Student Services, and two or three upper division colleges.

Other representatives who participate are from minority affairs, the ROTC units, and from one to four transfer students. Each university department having a representative making these trips is responsible for per diem costs, and cost of transportation is shared by all.

Recently, because of budget requirements, transportation has been by minibus, paid for by the Office of Academic Affairs. One such trip was shared by four universities and the transportation cost was split four ways. In Georgia, this is common practice with a tour of the junior colleges with representatives of the state colleges and universities participating.

OTHER STATES AND ARTICULATION ACTIVITIES

As the number of community colleges has increased and the number of transfer students seeking admission to upper division has grown, pressure for better articulation has intensified. Many of the programs and processes in operation in Florida have been implemented in other states.

In his book, Middleman in Higher Education, Kintzer¹⁶ indicated that articulation agreements within states were on the increase across the country. In addition to Florida, other states which now have formal state-wide agreements or are in process of gaining approval are Georgia (1968), Illinois, Oklahoma, Missouri, Massachusetts, and Texas.¹⁷

Additional efforts toward resolving conflict over transfer are being made in many other states. Articulation conferences involving all levels of post-secondary education, inter-institutional agreements, and the organization of regional consortia are some of the ways which are being used to attack these problems.

For example, North Carolina recently adopted guidelines for transfer;¹⁸ Oklahoma State University has developed a counseling handbook;¹⁹ one of the state universities in West Virginia was looking for an articulation officer; and the University of Iowa is currently working on two problem areas to improve articulation with community colleges.²⁰

CONCLUSION

To be successful, any program of articulation has to involve an attitudinal change in those who deal with the students involved. Since the middle sixties, much has happened to indicate that such a change is taking place. Many problems still remain, however. There are still many words to be written, many conflicts to be resolved, and an increasing number and variety of students to be served.

Higher education has come a long way along the road to better articulation. With the spirit of good will and cooperative effort which presently exists, remaining problems will be approached and attacked jointly in order to promote both student welfare and the interests of higher education.

FOOTNOTES

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